

Amendment to Claims

1. (Currently Amended) In an apparatus for sealing the space between a floating roof and a tank wall in a liquid storage tank which includes means for mounting a shoe on the floating roof in the storage tank and maintaining the shoe in contact with an inner wall of the tank, the improvement which comprises an electrically conductive bonding strap connected at one end to a lower portion of the shoe assembly below liquid level and at a point where the shoe assembly contacts the inner wall and connected at a second end to the floating roof below liquid level, the bonding strap being of a length to minimize its self inductance, wherein the bonding strap is entirely below liquid level so as to provide a preferred path for dissipating electrical current through an oxygen deficient environment.
2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the bonding strap is made of a material selected from the group consisting of stainless steel, copper, tinned-copper, bronze and mixtures thereof.
3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the liquid storage tank is an external floating roof tank.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the bonding strap is no longer than required to bridge the distance between the floating roof and the shoe assembly at locations the bonding strap is connected there between, allowing for seal tolerances.
5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the bonding strap is made of a corrosion resistant material.

6. (Cancelled)
7. (Currently Amended) A method of protecting a floating roof tank from the effects of a lightning strike comprising the steps of placing an electrically conductive bonding strap at one end into electrical contact with an inner wall of the tank through a sliding shoe seal assembly at a point where the assembly contacts the inner wall below liquid level in the tank and connecting a second end of the bonding strap to the floating roof below liquid level, the bonding strap being of a length to minimize its self inductance, wherein the bonding strap is entirely below liquid level so as to provide a preferred electrically efficient path for conducting electrical current through an oxygen deficient environment.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the bonding strap is made of a material selected from the group consisting of stainless steel, copper, tinned-copper, bronze and mixtures thereof.
9. Cancelled
10. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the bonding strap is no longer than the allowed seal tolerances between the floating roof and the shoe assembly at locations the bonding strap is connected there between.
11. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the bonding strap is made of a corrosion resistant material.
12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) In an apparatus for sealing the space between a floating roof and an inner tank wall in a liquid storage tank, the improvement which comprises ~~an electrically conductive bonding strap in~~ means for establishing electrical communication ~~with~~ between the inner tank wall and the floating roof located entirely below liquid level, the ~~bonding strap~~ said means being of a length to minimize its self inductance, so as to provide a preferred path for dissipating electrical current through an oxygen deficient environment.
14. (Currently Amended) In a liquid storage tank having an inner tank wall and a floating roof, the improvement which comprises means for establishing electrical communication between the inner tank wall and the floating roof, said means being located entirely below the liquid level and being configured to have minimum self inductance, so as to provide a preferred path for dissipating electrical current through an oxygen deficient environment in the storage tank.
15. (Currently Amended) A method of protecting a floating roof tank from the effects of a lightning strike comprising the steps of providing an ~~electrically conductive bonding strap in~~ means for establishing electrical communication ~~with an~~ between inner tank wall and the floating roof whereby ~~the bonding strap~~ said means is located entirely below liquid level, ~~the bonding strap~~ said means being of a length to minimize its self inductance, so as to provide a preferred electrically efficient path for conduction of lightning stroke current through an oxygen deficient environment.

16. (New) An apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the means for establishing electrical communication is an electrically conductive bonding strap.
17. (New) An apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the bonding strap is made of a material selected from the group consisting of stainless steel, copper, tinned copper, bronze and mixtures thereof.
18. (New) An apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the bonding strap is formed as a flexible ribbon-shaped strap or as a flexible braid.
19. (New) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the means for establishing electrical communication is an electrically conductive bonding strap.
20. (New) An apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the bonding strap is made of a material selected from the group consisting of stainless steel, copper, tinned copper, bronze and mixtures thereof.
21. (New) An apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the bonding strap is formed as a flexible ribbon-shaped strap or as a flexible braid.
22. (New) An apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the means for establishing electrical communication is an electrically conductive bonding strap.
23. (New) An apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the bonding strap is made of a material selected from the group consisting of stainless steel, copper, tinned copper, bronze and mixtures thereof.

24. (New) An apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the bonding strap is formed as a flexible ribbon-shaped strap or as a flexible braid.